

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is as clear an example of a violation of the public trust that accompanies the grant of a license to use the public airwaves as there can be.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But by planning to air, in prime time and commercial free, a partisan program which attacks one presidential candidate, Sinclair is failing in that mission. Instead, Sinclair is proving that it operates in a way that advances only the personal political beliefs of its owners. Further, Sinclair cannot claim that this is what the public wants or that this is in its business interests, as Sinclair has ordered that the broadcast be commercial free, meaning it will not generate revenue for Sinclair. This is not what the public airwaves are supposed to be used for and it is incumbent on the FCC to do its job and prevent this abuse.

Additionally, Sinclair's actions show the potential dangers associated with the ongoing media consolidation. This is why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.